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Pol 14 Viet S

(1443)

Department of State **TELEGRAM**

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE 617

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 07107 08 1202Z

47
ACTION EA-20

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-08 L-04 NSAE-00
NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12 IO-16 UPW-01
AID-28 RSR-01 /133 W
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R 080955Z MAY 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4552
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

SAIGON 7107 5/8/71

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Susan Szuberg DATE 1/26/82
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☑
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAIGON 7107

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: UPPER HOUSE PASSES LOWER HOUSE ELECTION BILL

REF: SAIGON TEL 0195 JAN 6 Pol 14 Viet S

1. UPPER HOUSE APPROVED LOWER HOUSE ELECTION BILL MAY 7 AFTER TWO DAYS OF DEBATE. BILL AS PASSED CONFORMED TO EARLIER LOWER HOUSE VERSION IN MOST RESPECTS (SEE REFTEL). AUGUST 29 WAS CONFIRMED AS ELECTION DATE, WITH END OF OLD LOWER HOUSE TERM AND BEGINNING OF NEW TERM SET AT OCTOBER 4. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 47 OF CONSTITUTION MAIN CHANGES WERE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) TWO RESERVED SEATS WERE ADDED FOR MONTAGNARDS, ONE EACH IN LAM DONG AND QUANG DUC PROVINCES. HOWEVER, EFFORT BY MONTAGNARD SENATOR KSOR ROT TO ELIMINATE RESTRICTION AGAINST ETHNIC MINORITY CANDIDATES RUNNING EXCEPT WHERE THEY HAVE RESERVED SEATS WAS UNSUCCESSFUL.

(B) SPECIFIED PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT OFFICIALS WISHING TO BE CANDIDATES MUST HAVE RESIGNED AT LEAST SIX MONTHS BEFORE ELECTION DAY, INSTEAD OF ONE YEAR AS REQUIRED IN LOWER HOUSE VER-

(2)

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SION. LIST WAS EXPANDED SLIGHTLY TO INCLUDE CHIEU HOI AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

(C) PROVINCES AND INDEPENDENT MUNICIPALITIES HAVING MORE THAN 225,000 VOTERS WILL BE VIDED INTO TWO CONSTITUENCIES.

(D) CANDIDATES HAVING LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM RECOGNIZED POLITICAL PARTY ARE EXEMPT FROM REGULAR 50,000 PIASTER DEPOSIT.

2. BILL NOW RETURNS TO LOWER HOUSE, WHERE TWO-THIRDS VOTE NEEDED TO REJECT UPPER HOUSE CHANGES.
BUNKER

ORIGIN/ACTION
EA-8

RM/R	REP	AF
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ARMY	CIA	NAVY
3	16	5
OSD	USIA	NSA
3	10	3
		NSC
		6

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

POL 14 VIETS (1444)

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A-59 NO. | CONFIDENTIAL | HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : BANGKOK, CINCPAC, DANANG, USDEL FRANCE, VIENTIANE, CINCPAC FOR POLAD

Action assigned to

Action Taken

Date of Action 6/4/71 EA/VN

FROM : Amembassy SAIGON

DATE: May 12, 1971

Action Office Symbol

Name of Officer

SUBJECT : The Vietnamese Presidential Elections -- A Change in the Outlook

REF : a) Saigon A-7, February 4, 1971; b) Saigon A-46; c) Saigon 4062

1. SUMMARY: Since our assessment of February 4 (ref. a), the major change in the outlook on the presidential election has been the emergence of Vice President Ky as a candidate. Ky has strongly hinted he will run, harshly criticized President Thieu, sharply modified his own earlier hawkish stands, and generally tried to capture a position for himself in the middle ground. Even if Ky in the end does not run for president his current activity will possibly have increased his bargaining power to be a vice presidential candidate with Minh or, more improbably now, Thieu. General Minh has done little except to organize quietly. He also still has not publicly declared his candidacy, but at this juncture apparently intends to run. President Thieu's position has possibly been hurt by recriminations over Lam Son 719, smuggling scandals, and popular disgruntlement over the economic situation. He appears, however, to have the support of most political parties and the major part of the religious and ethnic minorities. Ky's candidacy could cut into Thieu's constituency, but it is still widely assumed by public opinion that Thieu will win reelection. END SUMMARY.

Ky

2. Perhaps encouraged by the defeat in the Upper House of the provision of the presidential election bill requiring nomination by 40 assemblymen or 100 provincial councilmen (ref. c), a condition difficult for him to fulfill, Vice President Ky has recently all but admitted he is a presidential candidate. He has sharply attacked Thieu on diverse grounds including corruption and misdirection of Lam Son 719. Maintaining times have changed, and that he is neither hawk nor dove, Ky has spoken out against an

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Drafted by: POL:JSylvester:sfb 5/11/71

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Clearances:

1971 MAY 18 PM 4 30

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